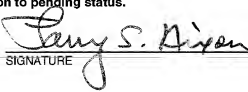


FORM PTO-1590 (REV 11-98)	U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE	ATTORNEY'S DOCKET NUMBER <b>36-1350</b>
TRANSMITTAL LETTER TO THE UNITED STATES DESIGNATED/ELECTED OFFICE (DO/EO/US) CONCERNING A FILING UNDER 35 U.S.C. 371		U.S. APPLICATION NO. (If known, see 37 C.F.R. 1.5) <b>09/623317</b> (To Be Assigned)
INTERNATIONAL APPLICATION NO. <b>PCT/GB99/00822</b>	INTERNATIONAL FILING DATE <b>17 March 1999</b>	PRIORITY DATE CLAIMED <b>27 March 1998</b>
TITLE OF INVENTION <b>TELECOMMUNICATIONS NETWORK</b>		
APPLICANT(S) FOR DO/EO/US <b>LAUNDERS et al.</b>		
Applicant herewith submits to the United States Designated/Elected Office (DO/EO/US) the following items and other information:		
<p>1. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> This is a <b>FIRST</b> submission of items concerning a filing under 35 U.S.C. 371.</p> <p>2. <input type="checkbox"/> This is a <b>SECOND</b> or <b>SUBSEQUENT</b> submission of items concerning a filing under 35 U.S.C. 371.</p> <p>3. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> This is an express request to begin national examination procedures (35 U.S.C. 371(f)) at any time rather than delay examination until the expiration of the applicable time limit set in 35 U.S.C. 371(b) and PCT Articles 22 and 39(1).</p> <p>4. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A proper Demand for International Preliminary Examination was made by the 19<sup>th</sup> month from the earliest claimed priority date.</p> <p>5. A copy of the International Application as filed (35 U.S.C. 371(c)(2)).</p> <p>6. <input type="checkbox"/> A translation of the International Application into English (35 U.S.C. 371(c)(2)).</p> <p>7. <input type="checkbox"/> Amendments to the claims of the International Application under PCT Article 19 (35 U.S.C. 371(c)(3)).</p> <p>8. <input type="checkbox"/> A translation of the amendments to the claims under PCT Article 19 (U.S.C. 371(c)(3)).</p> <p>9. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> An oath or declaration of the inventor(s) (35 U.S.C. 371(c)(4)).</p> <p>10. <input type="checkbox"/> A translation of the annexes to the International Preliminary Examination Report under PCT Article 36 (35 U.S.C. 371(c)(5)).</p> <p>11. To 16. Below concern document(s) or information included:</p> <p>11. <input type="checkbox"/> An Information Disclosure Statement under 37 C.F.R. 1.97 and 1.98.</p> <p>12. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> An assignment document for recording. A separate cover sheet in compliance with 37 C.F.R. 3.28 and 3.31 is included.</p> <p>13. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A FIRST preliminary amendment. <input type="checkbox"/> A SECOND or SUBSEQUENT preliminary amendment.</p> <p>14. <input type="checkbox"/> A substitute specification.</p> <p>15. <input type="checkbox"/> A change of power of attorney and/or address letter.</p> <p>16. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other items or information. <b>International Preliminary Examination Report with amended sheets</b></p>		

U.S. APPLICATION NO. (If known, see 37 C.F.R. 1.5)		INTERNATIONAL APPLICATION NO.		ATTORNEY'S DOCKET NUMBER	
(To Be Assigned) <b>09/6223317</b>		<b>PCT/GB99/00822</b>		<b>36-1350</b>	
17. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The following fees are submitted:				<b>CALCULATIONS</b> PTO USE ONLY	
<b>BASIC NATIONAL FEE (37 C.F.R. 1.492(a)(1)-(5)):</b> -- Neither international preliminary examination fee (37 C.F.R. 1.482) nor international search fee (37 C.F.R. 1.445(a)(2)) paid to USPTO and International Search Report not prepared by the EPO or JPO .....\$970.00 -- International preliminary examination fee (37 C.F.R. 1.482) not paid to USPTO but International Search Report prepared by the EPO or JPO .....\$840.00 -- International preliminary examination fee (37 C.F.R. 1.482) not paid to USPTO but international search fee (37 C.F.R. 1.445(a)(2)) paid to USPTO .....\$690.00 -- International preliminary examination fee paid to USPTO (37 C.F.R. 1.482) but all claims did not satisfy provisions of PCT Article 33(1)-(4) .....\$670.00 -- International preliminary examination fee paid to USPTO (37 C.F.R. 1.482) and all claims satisfied provisions of PCT Article 33(1)-(4) .....\$96.00					
<b>ENTER APPROPRIATE BASIC FEE AMOUNT =</b>				\$	840.00
Surcharge of \$130.00 for furnishing the oath or declaration later than <input type="checkbox"/> 20 <input type="checkbox"/> 30 months from the earliest claimed priority date (37 C.F.R. 1.492(e)).				\$	0.00
<b>CLAIMS</b>		<b>NUMBER FILED</b>	<b>NUMBER EXTRA</b>	<b>RATE</b>	
Total Claims	15	-20 =	0	X	\$18.00
Independent Claims	3	-3 =	0	X	\$78.00
MULTIPLE DEPENDENT CLAIMS(S) (if applicable)				\$260.00	\$ 0.00
<b>TOTAL OF ABOVE CALCULATIONS =</b>				\$	<b>840.00</b>
Reduction by 1/3 for filing by small entity, if applicable. A Small Entity Statement must also be filed (Note 37 C.F.R. 1.9, 1.27, 1.28).					0.00
<b>SUBTOTAL =</b>				\$	<b>840.00</b>
Processing fee of \$130.00, for furnishing the English Translation later than <input type="checkbox"/> 20 <input type="checkbox"/> 30 months from the earliest claimed priority date (37 C.F.R. 1.492(f)).				+	0.00
<b>TOTAL NATIONAL FEE =</b>				\$	<b>840.00</b>
Fee for recording the enclosed assignment (37 C.F.R. 1.21(h)). The assignment must be accompanied by an appropriate cover sheet (37 C.F.R. 3.28, 3.31). \$40.00 per property				+	\$ 40.00
Fee for Petition to Revive Unintentionally Abandoned Application (\$1210.00 - Small Entity = \$605.00)				\$	0.00
<b>TOTAL FEES ENCLOSED =</b>				\$	<b>840.00</b>
				Amount to be:	
				refunded	\$
				Charged	\$
a. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A check in the amount of \$880.00 to cover the above fees is enclosed. b. <input type="checkbox"/> Please charge my Deposit Account No. 14-1140 in the amount of \$_____ to cover the above fees. A duplicate copy of this form is enclosed. c. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required, or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 14-1140. A duplicate copy of this form is enclosed. d. <input type="checkbox"/> The entire content of the foreign application(s), referred to in this application is/are hereby incorporated by reference in this application.					
<b>NOTE: Where an appropriate time limit under 37 C.F.R. 1.494 or 1.495 has not been met, a petition to revive (37 C.F.R. 1.137(a) or (b)) must be filed and granted to restore the application to pending status.</b>					
<b>SEND ALL CORRESPONDENCE TO:</b>					
NIXON & VANDERHYE P.C. 1100 North Glebe Road, 8 <sup>th</sup> Floor Arlington, Virginia 22201 Telephone: (703) 816-4000					
 SIGNATURE					
<b>Larry S. Nixon</b> NAME					
<b>25,640</b> REGISTRATION NUMBER					
<b>August 31, 2000</b> Date					

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re Patent Application of

**LAUNDERS et al.**

Atty. Ref.: 36-1350

Serial No. (To Be Assigned)

Group:

National Phase of PCT/GB99/00822

Filed: August 31, 2000

Examiner:

For: **TELECOMMUNICATIONS NETWORK**

**August 31, 2000**

Assistant Commissioner for Patents  
Washington, DC 20231  
Sir:

**PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT**

Prior to calculation of the filing fee and in order to place the above identified application in better condition for examination, please amend the claims as follows:

**IN THE CLAIMS**

Claim 3, line 1, delete "or 2",

Claim 4, line 1, delete "or 3",

Claim 6, line 1, change "any one of the preceding claims" to "claim 1",

Claim 8, line 1, change "any one of the preceding claims" to "claim 1",

Claim 9, line 1, change "any one of the preceding claims" to "claim 1".

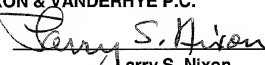
**REMARKS**

The above amendments are made to place the claims in a more traditional format.

Respectfully submitted,

**NIXON & VANDERHYE P.C.**

By:

  
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LSN:ms

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5/prts

1

## Telecommunications Network

## BACKGROUND TO THE INVENTION

The present invention relates to a telecommunications network, and in particular to a network in which subscribers can use short dialling codes.

It is common practice in networks using modern digital exchanges to provide a facility for customers to use short dialling codes to access frequently dialled numbers. The customer programs the allocation of short dialling codes by dialling out to the local exchange an appropriate sequence of digits. The local exchange records the allocation of codes, and on subsequent calls causes a short code to be translated into the corresponding allocated telephone number.

## SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

According to a first aspect of the present invention, there is provided a method of operating a telecommunications network including:

- (a) in response to instructions from a second party remote from a subscriber terminal, pre-programming the network to respond to one or more short dialling codes from the subscriber terminal,
- (b) communicating to the subscriber data identifying the allocation of short dialling codes pre-programmed in step (a); and
- (c) subsequently initiating a call from the said subscriber terminal by dialling one of the said short codes.

Although, as noted above, the facility to programme short dialling codes has been widely available, it has not been widely used. The present invention significantly increases the ease of use of the short code facility by allowing the allocation of short codes to pre-programmed by another party, such as the network operator or a service provider connected to the network. This is done moreover without requiring any modification to the standard call control processes. Common call control processes, using the full numbering range of the network, can therefore be used both by subscribers using this service feature, and by other subscribers.

Preferably step (b) includes communicating the said data to the subscriber terminal in an off-hook signal.

The term "off-hook signal" is used to denote a signal played automatically to the user when the terminal is placed in the off-hook state, for example by lifting a telephone handset in order to dial out. This aspect of the invention uses this off-

hook signal to indicate to the subscriber the allocation of short codes. This provides a further significant advance in the ease of use of the service by removing the need for the subscriber to remember or record the allocation of codes. At the same time it facilitates the use of centrally-programmed codes, since changes or  
5 updates can be readily notified to the subscriber, and serves to prompt the subscriber to use the service. Alternatively or in addition other means may be used to communicate the data identifying the allocation of short codes, for example via a separate data communications network such as the Internet.

Preferably the data communicated to the subscriber may include a paid-for  
10 advertisement for goods or services accessed by a telephone number corresponding to one of the said short dialling codes. This preferred feature allows the service to generate extra revenue for the network operator. In return the network may generate a network billing record at a reduced billing rate (reduced, that is, compared to the rate for subscribers not receiving the advertisements) for  
15 calls made from the said subscriber terminal.

Preferably the step of pre-programming the network includes programming a number translation platform remote from the subscriber terminal with a plurality of different short dialling code allocations for a plurality of different subscriber terminals. Preferably the method includes transmitting from a management  
20 platform to the number translation platform instructions for determining the allocation of short dialling codes, and transmitting from the management platform to a local exchange the said data identifying the allocation of short dialling codes for a respective subscriber terminal.

These preferred features serve to facilitate control and management of the  
25 pre-programmed facility in such a way that it can be provisioned for large numbers of subscribers whilst minimising the network overheads associated with the service.

According to a second aspect of the present invention, there is provided method of operating a telecommunications network, including communicating to a  
30 user of a subscriber terminal an off-hook signal which identifies an allocation of short dialling codes for the subscriber terminal.

The invention also encompasses a telecommunications network arranged to operate using a method in accordance with one or more of the preceding aspects.

## DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Systems embodying the present invention will now be described in further detail, with reference to the accompanying drawings in which:

- 5        Figure 1 is a schematic of a network suitable for use with the present invention;

Figure 2 is an example of a timing diagram for an off-hook signal;

Figure 3 is a schematic showing the signal flows when the invention is implemented on the network of Figure 1;

- 10       Figure 4 shows the architecture of a service control point;

Figure 5 shows a second example of a network embodying the invention.

## DESCRIPTION OF EXAMPLES

- Figure 1 shows a telecommunications network employing an IN (Intelligent Network) architecture. A service control point (SCP) 1 is connected via a common  
15       channel signalling network to digital main switch units (DMSU's) 2 and to digital local exchanges (DLE's) 3. A suitable architecture for the service control point is shown in Figure 4. The digital main switch units and digital local exchanges may be commercially available systems such as Ericsson's AXE10 or GPT's System X exchanges. These exchanges include a short code dialling facility.

- 20       A number of subscriber terminals, for example telephones, are connected to the local exchanges. A first group of subscriber terminals 6 are located in one geographical region, for example within one metropolitan area, and a second group of terminals 7 are located in another region. Although for ease of illustration only a few terminals are shown, in practice each group may include some thousands of  
25       subscriber terminals. Within the first group of subscriber terminals, some terminals, referenced 6a, fall in a first subscriber category (for example, domestic subscribers) and have the pre-programmed short dialling service provisioned. Other terminals, referenced 6b, fall into a different subscriber category (for example, payphones in public houses) and have the pre-programmed short dialling service  
30       provisioned. A third group of terminals, referenced 6c do not have the short dialling service provisioned.

The pre-programmed short code dialling service is implemented using an automatic call distribution platform (ACD) 8. The ACD platform 8 is connected to the service control point 1, and to a management platform 9. The ACD platform

carries out number translation for the short codes using a dialling plan. The ACD platform carries out number translation of the type conventionally used, for example, for free-phone (0800) numbers. This approach to implementing the invention is preferred since it facilitates access to the relevant service features by parties other than the network operator. Alternatively, it is technically possible for the local exchanges to be programmed directly with the final destination numbers corresponding to the short dial codes, in which case the use of the ACD platform is dispensed with.

Billing events are notified to a billing platform 10 from the service control point 1. The billing events distinguish between, for example, calls from terminals in group 6a, and calls from terminals in group 6c, and cause a lower billing rate to be applied to the former.

In operation, calling plans for those customers for whom the short code dialling service is provisioned are stored in the ACD platform 8. When one of these customers picks up their telephone handset they hear first a short period of the standard dial tone. This is followed by announcements played in-band to the customer from their local exchange. These announcements include identification of the relevant short codes together with advertisements for goods or services associated with one or more of the short codes. Figure 2 shows examples of the service timings. In this example, the standard dial tone is followed by a single advertising slot which would be broadcast in a pre-determined and cyclical nature along with many other advertisements of identical period – but only one per slot. After the advertisement slot, all shortcodes would be announced along with corresponding reference to their respective services. The first short code should hold the number of the advertiser from the advertisement slot. The remaining short codes are numbers associated with services, both local and national. Some of these remaining short codes should be fixed such they are not only locally defined, but provide a national standardised reference to specific services within any locality (e.g. for Taxis). Therefore, whenever any customer travelled around the country, a local service could be called immediately without prior research by simply dialling the nationally standardised short code associated with such a service.

Finally, the advertisement followed by short code reference is repeated cyclically whilst the handset is raised.

Figure 3 shows in further detail an implementation of the service outlined above. In this implementation, the ACD platform is termed the metropolitan telephone advertising ACD, and the management system is termed the telephone advertising management system (TAMS). Both advertisers and service subscribers interface via customer service agent to the Telephone Advertising Management Systems (TAMS). The TAMS is operated by the telephony advertising (TA) service provider.

The TAMS system operates on a metropolitan basis, that is to say it provides services tailored to a particular metropolitan region. The system performs the following functions: creates short code dialling updates for all metropolitan subscribers in accordance with the advertisers' wishes; creates dialling plan updates for the metropolitan Automatic Call Distribution (ACD) platform; manages the recording and the deployment to all local exchanges of the dial tone advertisement. The short code updates are sent to the operations, Administration and Maintenance System within the network operator's domain. The short codes are then fed into the correct user accounts on the local switches. The relevant user accounts are determined by the TAMS system. For example, the system may store a list of subscribers within group 6a and another list of subscribers within group 6b. The relevant local exchanges are instructed to play one advertisement and group of short code identifications to subscribers in the first group, and a second advertisement and group of short code identifications to the subscribers in the second group.

The Metropolitan Telephone Advertising ACD (MTAA) platform runs a set of Intelligent Network applications that provide the necessary number translation of the short code dialling 0800 numbers into local and national services. The MTAA applications are defined by the telephone advertising service provider, but run on the network operator's Service Control Point.

In the example illustrated in Figure 4, when the user picks up the telephone, they hear 1 second of dial tone followed by a 10 second advertisement, followed by a list of local or national services followed by the appropriate short code to press to access that service. In this case the dial tone offers, e.g., the option of pressing \*\*18 for a Taxi. The user then dials \*\*18. The short code dialling feature at the local exchange looks up the telephone number and dials the corresponding number, which in this case is a freephone number, 0800 123456.



Different 0800 numbers may be generated depending on the short code dialled by the user. This number is passed to a DMSU which functions as a Service Switching Point (SSP). The SSP creates an initialDP message (INAP) giving the calling and the called freephone number. These are translated by the MTAA  
5 application into a physical number which is the advertiser's local number. The SSP is then instructed by the Connect message to route the call to that number, which in this example is 01473 257778. Although in this case the number is on the same local exchange as the user, this is not necessarily so.

Figure 4 shows a possible architecture for an SCP, termed here the  
10 Network Intelligence Platform (NIP). A service management server is connected via an FDDI optical fibre LAN 51 to an overload control server (OCS) and to transaction servers (TS). The transaction servers implement advanced service control functions. The OCS and transaction servers are connected via a second FDDI LAN 52 to communications servers (TS) which are connected to the SS7  
15 (ITU Signalling System no. 7) signalling network.

Although in this example, the invention is implemented using a fixed wire network using an IN architecture, it will be understood that a wide variety of different architectures may be used in implementing the invention. For example, the subscribers may use mobile cellular terminals communicating with local base  
20 stations.

As a further alternative, the management and number translation services may be carried out by computing platforms e.g. a service node located at the edge of the network, instead of using SCP's and associated peripherals as in the example above. In this case, a user from any network could call an edge of  
25 network number, either via an 0800 number followed by number translation or directly. Once through to the service node an advertisement is played to the user which contains the same content as the dial tone in the example above. After the advertisement, DTMF (dual tone multi-frequency) or speech signals can be sent by the calling user to select the desired advertiser.

Figure 5 shows the structure of a network operating using a service node, as described above. A user at location A, for example, dials the number of the service provider, and is connected via intermediate local exchanges 501,502 to the service provider node 503. The calling line identity (CLI) of location A is passed to the node with the incoming call. The node 503 then answers the call. Service  
30

logic 504 at the node uses the CLI to address a look-up table which maps CLI's to geographical locations and subscriber categories. The node selects and plays to the caller an announcement corresponding to the callers location and category. The announcement offers a menu of short dialling codes. These may then be  
5 dialled by the user and transmitted to the node as DTMF tones, or may be spoken by the user. Speech is recognised and translated at the service node by an IVR (interactive voice recognition) platform 505. In response to the selection by the user, for example of short code \*\*18, the service node makes a call out to the corresponding number - 01473 257778 - and the call from location A is connected  
10 through to that number. The call may be made by tromboning the call the service node, or take back and transfer may be effected by the node releasing the call from A, dialling a network control platform and communicating the corresponding number, and the network switch, which has held the incoming leg of the call from A, establishing a leg from the switch to the corresponding number. This take back  
15 and transfer method is described and claimed in the present applicant's co-pending British and European patent applications filed 20th March 1998 Applicant's reference A25540, title "Communications Network", the contents of which are incorporated herein by reference.

The example of Figure 5 also illustrates the use of a mobile terminal. The  
20 user at location B dials the service provider number of node 53. The call is passed via the local base station 506, mobile cellular network 507 and mobile/PSTN gateway 508. It is then routed on to the service provider node 503. In this case, cell location data is passed together with the CLI, and the service logic at the node 503 uses both the cell location data and the CLI in addressing a look-up table to  
25 determine the appropriate announcements to be played to the caller. In other respects, the call is handled as described above for the fixed line caller.

## CLAIMS

5

1. A method of operating a telecommunications network including:

(a) in response to instructions from a second party remote from a subscriber terminal, pre-programming the network to respond to one or more short

10 dialling codes from the subscriber terminal,

(b) communicating to the subscriber data identifying the allocation of short dialling codes pre-programmed in step (a); and

(c) subsequently initiating a call from the said subscriber terminal by dialling one of the said short codes.

15

2. A method according to claim 1, in which step (b) includes communicating the said data to the subscriber terminal in an off-hook signal.

3. A method according to claim 1 or 2, in which the said data is communicated to  
20 the subscriber terminal as an in-band audio announcement.

4. A method according to claim 2 or 3, in which the data includes a paid-for advertisement for goods or services accessed by a telephone number corresponding to one of the said short dialling codes.

25

5. A method according to claim 4, further comprising generating a network billing record at a reduced billing rate for calls made from the said subscriber terminal.

6. A method according to any one of the preceding claims, in which the step of  
30 pre-programming the network includes programming a number translation platform remote from the subscriber terminal with a plurality of different short dialling code allocations for a plurality of different subscriber terminals.

7. A method according to claim 6, including transmitting from a management platform to the number translation platform instructions for determining the allocation of short dialling codes, and transmitting from the management platform to a local exchange the said data identifying the allocation of short dialling codes  
5 for a respective subscriber terminal.

8. A method according to any one of the preceding claims including pre-programming a common group of short dialling codes for a plurality of subscriber terminals in a common geographical region.

10

9. A method according to any one of the preceding claims including pre-programming different short dialling code allocations for different respective groups of subscribers in different subscriber categories.

15 10. A method according to claim 1, in which the step of pre-programming the network includes storing data determining the allocation of short codes at a service node at located at the edge of the network.

11. A method according to claim 10, in which the user first initiates a call to the service node, and the service node answers the said call and communicates to the user the said data identifying the allocation of short codes.  
20

12. A method of operating a telecommunications network, including communicating to a user of a subscriber terminal an off-hook signal which  
25 identifies an allocation of short dialling codes for the subscriber terminal.

13. A method according to claim 9, in which the off-hook signal comprises an in-band audio announcement.

30 14. A telecommunications network including:

(a) means responsive to instructions from a second party remote from a subscriber terminal for pre-programming the network to respond to one or more short dialling codes from the subscriber terminal,

(b) means for communicating to the subscriber data identifying the allocation of short dialling codes pre-programmed by the said means responsive to instructions from a second party; and

(c) means responsive to a short code subsequently selected by the  
5 subscriber for connecting the said subscriber to a destination number determined  
by the said allocation of short dialling codes.

15. A network according to claim 14, in which the said means for communicating are arranged to generate an off-hook signal containing the said data.

ABSTRACT

In a telecommunications network, short dialling codes for a subscriber terminal are programmed by another party, and the allocation of codes is communicated to the  
5 user. An audio announcement played as part of the dial tone may be used to communicate the allocation of codes.

001000 2400000000

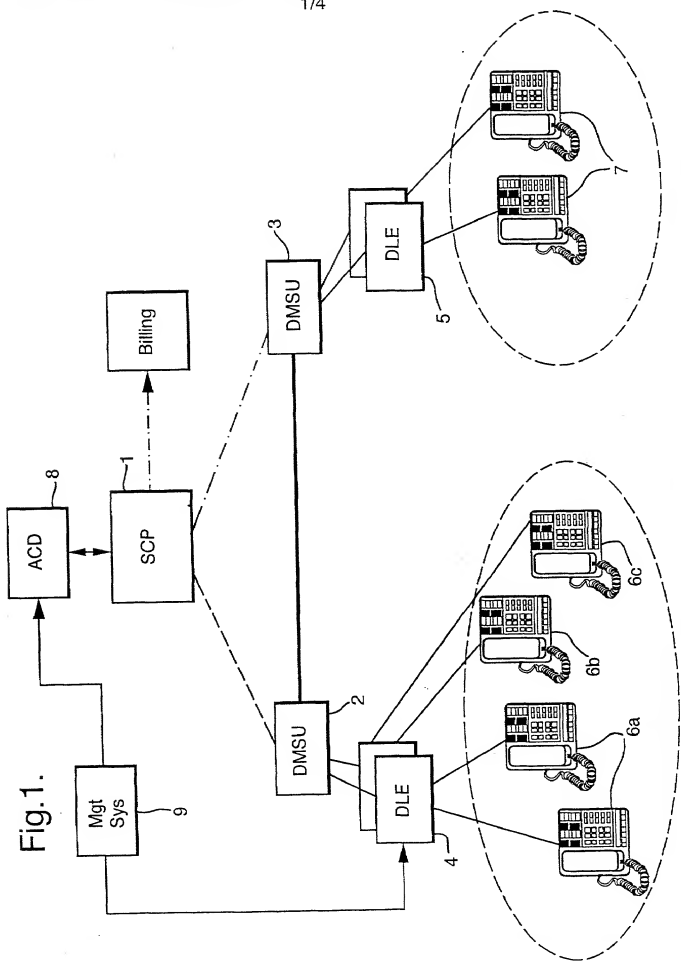


Fig.3.

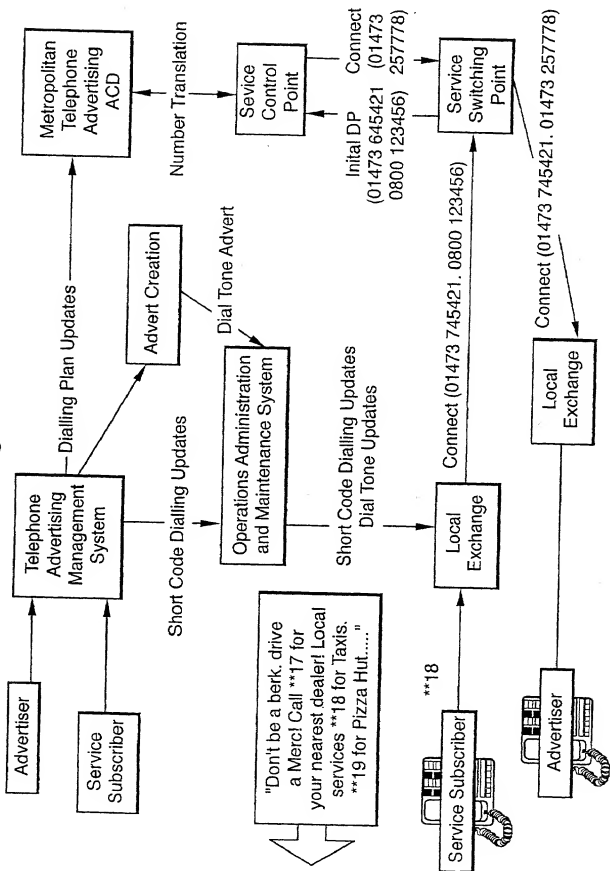




Fig.2.

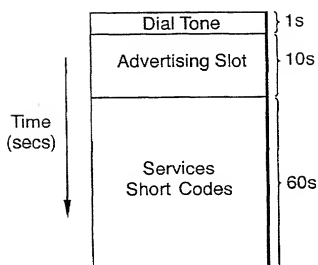
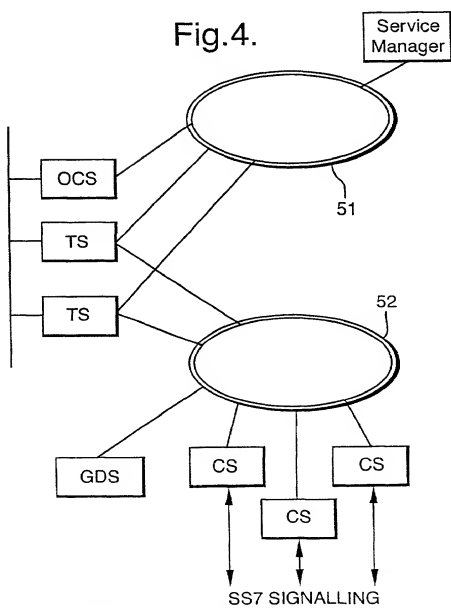


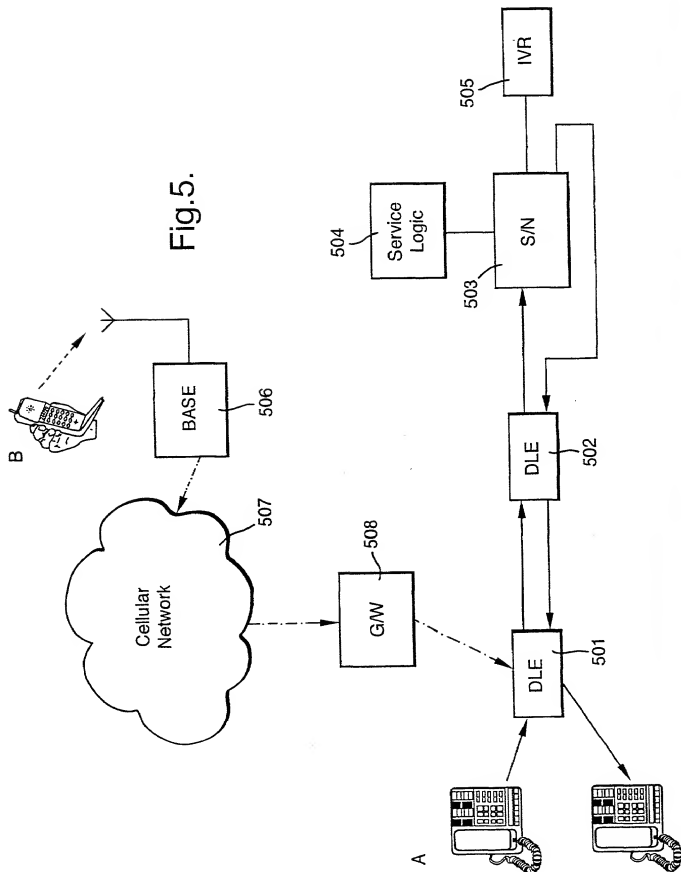
Fig.4.



09/623317

4/4

Fig.5.



RULE 63 (37 C.F.R. 1.63)  
DECLARATION AND POWER OF ATTORNEY  
FOR PATENT APPLICATION

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

As a below named inventor, I hereby declare that my residence, post office address and citizenship are as stated below next to my name, and I believe I am the original, first and sole inventor (if only one name is listed below) or an original, first and joint inventor (if plural names are listed below) of the subject matter which is claimed and for which a patent is sought on the invention entitled: TELECOMMUNICATIONS NETWORK ✓

[ ] is attached hereto.

[ ] was filed on \_\_\_\_\_ as U.S. Application Serial No. \_\_\_\_\_

[x] was filed as PCT international application No. PCT/ GB99/00822 ✓ on 17 March 1999 ✓

and (if applicable to U.S. or PCT application) was amended on \_\_\_\_\_

I hereby state that I have reviewed and understand the contents of the above identified specification, including the claims, as amended by any amendment referred to above. I acknowledge the duty to disclose information which is material to the examination of this application in accordance with 37 C.F.R. 1.56. I hereby claim foreign priority benefits under 35 U.S.C. 119/365 of any foreign application(s) for patent or inventor's certificate listed below and have also identified below any foreign application for patent or inventor's certificate having a filing date before that of the application on which priority is claimed or, if no priority is claimed, before the filing date of this application:

**Prior Foreign Application(s):**

Application Number	Country	Day/Month/Year Filed
<u>98302396.1</u> ✓	<u>EUROPE</u> ✓	<u>27 March 1998</u> ✓

I hereby claim the benefit under 35 U.S.C. 119(c) of any United States provisional application(s) listed below.

Application Number	Day/Month/Year Filed
--------------------	----------------------

I hereby claim the benefit under 35 U.S.C. 120/365 of all prior United States and PCT international applications listed above or below and, insofar as the subject matter of each of the claims of this application is not disclosed in such prior applications in the manner provided by the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112, I acknowledge the duty to disclose material information as defined in 37 C.F.R. 1.56 which occurred between the filing date of the prior applications and the national or PCT international filing date of this application:

**Prior U.S./PCT Application(s):**

Application Serial No.	Day/Month/Year Filed	Status: patented, pending, abandoned
<u>PCT/GB99/00822</u> ✓	<u>17 March 1999</u> ✓	<u>PENDING</u>

I hereby declare that all statements made herein of my own knowledge are true and that statements made on information and belief are believed to be true; and further that these statements were made with the knowledge that willful false statements and the like so made are punishable by fine or imprisonment, or both, under Section 1001 of Title 18 of the United States Code and that such willful false statements may jeopardize the validity of the application or any patent issued thereon. And I hereby appoint NIXON & VANDERHYE P.C., 1100 North Glebe Road, 8th Floor, Arlington, VA 22201-4714, telephone number (703) 816-4000 (to whom all communications are to be directed), and the following attorneys thereof (of the same address) individually and collectively my attorneys to prosecute this application and to transact all business in the Patent and Trademark Office connected therewith and with the resulting patent: Arthur R Crawford, 25327; Larry S. Nixon, 25640; Robert A. Vanderhye, 27076; James T. Hosmer, 30184; Robert W. Faris, 31352; Richard G. Besha, 22770; Mark E. Nusbaurm, 32348; Michael J. Keenan, 32106; Bryan H. Davidson, 30251; Stanley C. Spooner, 27393; Leonard C. Mitchard, 29009; Duane M. Byers, 33363; Paul J. Henon, 33626; Jeffrey H. Nelson, 30481; John R. Lastova, 33149; H. Warren Burnam Jr., 29266; Thomas E. Byrne, 32265; Mary J. Wilson, 32955; J. Scott Davidson, 33489; Alan M. Kagen, 36178; William J. Griffith, 31260; Robert A. Molan, 29834.

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